



NEWS RELEASE

Office of the United States Attorney
Eastern District of Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BEAUMONT BUST BRINGS IN CRACK DEALERS

(Beaumont, TX) A combined task force of federal, state and local law enforcement agents have begun arresting individuals involved in drug trafficking in Beaumont and Southeast Texas. Nineteen federal defendants are in custody and others have been arrested on state charges after a two year investigation.

The investigation grew out of the Beaumont Weed and Seed initiative, a federal program in the Charlton-Pollard area that targets high crime neighborhoods. According to court documents, the defendants were involved in trafficking crack cocaine in Charlton-Pollard. Earlier this summer, a federal grand jury returned numerous multi-count indictments charging the defendants with Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Deliver Crack Cocaine, or Possession with Intent Distribute Crack Cocaine, or Possession with Intent to Deliver Crack Cocaine within 1000 Feet of a Playground or School, or Unlawful Possession of a Firearm.

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U.S. Attorney Matthew D. Orwig was pleased with today's round-up, "Local police were joined today by their state and federal partners to clean the streets of the Charlton-Pollard neighborhood. This major drug bust is another successful milestone in the Weed & Seed program in Beaumont. We will continue to investigate and prosecute those who poison our communities with crack cocaine and other drugs."

If convicted, many of the defendants face up to life in prison. Other defendants face between 20 to 40 years in prison. It is important to note that an indictment is merely a charge and should not be considered as evidence of either guilt or innocence.

The cases are being investigated by the Beaumont Police Department, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the U.S. Marshal Service. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Joe Batte, Michelle Englade, and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Sarah Wannarka are prosecuting these cases.

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